



**Monthly Drought Update
Tuesday July 15, 2014
San Luis Obispo County**

Note: Information provided in this update varies by date.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

U.S. Drought Monitor Status:

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released June 26, 2014 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the **D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating**.

Recent Precipitation:

As of June 30, 2014, total rainfall amounts to date are approximately 34% of average annual rainfall totals.

San Luis Obispo County Precipitation Totals (in inches):

Community	Rainfall Total Received From Last Update (5/21/14 to 6/30/2014)	Rainfall To Date (7/1/13 to 6/30/14)	Avg. Annual Rainfall	% of Avg. Annual Rainfall
Nipomo South (730)	0.00	4.65	16.00	29%
Lopez Dam (737)	0.00	8.62	21.00	41%
SLO Reservoir (749)	0.00	8.50	25.00	34%
Los Osos Landfill (727)	0.00	6.81	20.00	34%
Cambria (717)	0.00	7.01	22.00	32%
Rocky Butte (703)	0.00	11.85	39.00	30%
Santa Margarita (723)	0.00	8.62	26.00	33%
Salinas Dam (719)	0.00	7.44	23.00	32%
Atascadero (711)	0.00	5.67	18.00	32%
Templeton (762)	0.00	6.22	14.70	42%
Paso Robles (city)	0.00	6.13	14.33	43%
Hog Canyon (709)	0.00	3.98	16.00	25%

Source: www.slocountywater.org County of San Luis Obispo-City of Paso Robles Website

Near-term Outlook for Precipitation:

It remains highly unlikely that precipitation totals will increase significantly over the coming months.

Reservoir Levels (% of capacity):

Note: Historical averages calculated using data from the following time frame:

Nacimiento: 1959 – 2013; Lopez: 1994-2013; Salinas: 1987-2013; and Whale Rock: 1985-2013.

Reservoir	% of Capacity	Current Acre Feet Storage	Updated
Nacimiento	19%	73,300	6/24/2014
Lopez	52%	25,191	6/34/2014
Salinas	32%	7,457	6/23/2014
Whale Rock	52%	20,072	6/18/2014

Source: www.slocountywater.org County of San Luis Obispo

STATE WATER

Status: The Department of Water Resources (DWR) continues to deliver State Water “Carryover” water for 2014 and DWR has increased its allocation for South of Delta Service Contractors from 0% to 5%. The Flood Control District is maximizing State Water deliveries to Zone 3 agencies.

Actions: The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with DWR regarding State Water Deliveries. Discussions are taking place regarding the Chorro Valley institutions and long-term drought planning if State Water deliveries decrease in 2015 and/or a shutdown of the system.

VULNERABLE WATER SYSTEMS

Status update on vulnerable systems throughout the county:

County Service Areas (CSA's):

Santa Margarita (CSA 23)

- Drought response level remains at ALERT status.
- Primary pumping is from shallow well No. 4. Deep well No. 3 is available for use if needed to supplement well No. 4.
- An emergency water supply project connecting Santa Margarita to Atascadero Mutual Water Company is being pursued through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) drought expedited implementation grant process. The board approved this project on June 17, 2014 to be included in the IRWM drought grant application.

Shandon (CSA 16)

- Two wells currently provide all water to the Shandon community.

Cayucos (CSA 10A)

- Supply is available from Whale Rock and one on - site well. Staff has given a presentation to the Advisory Committee and business groups regarding conserving this supply.

Avila Valley (CSA 12)

- Adequate supply is available from Lopez and State water “carryover” water sources for this year.

Chorro Valley Institutions (CMC, Animal Services, Sheriff, County Operations, Camp San Luis, Cuesta College, County Office of Education):

- 2014 State water carryover water is available and being provided.
- An interconnection between the existing Nacimiento Water Project pipeline and the existing Salinas pipeline is being pursued through the State's drought emergency funds. The board approved this project on June 17, 2014 to be included in the IRWM drought grant application.
- The existing distribution system is being evaluated to assure water losses are minimized.

Non-County Operated:

City of Morro Bay

Status: Emergency inter-tie with Chorro Valley and desal permit.

Cambria Community Services District

Status: Emergency San Simeon Creek Brackish Water Supply Project-Started Construction.

San Simeon Community Services District

Status: Proposed recycled water project part of June 17, 2014 IRWM drought application.

Heritage Ranch Community Services District

Status: The Nacimiento River is the only available water source for the community of Heritage Ranch. The emergency inter-tie agreement between the Flood Control District and the CSD was part of June 17, 2014 drought application.

Rural Paso Robles residents

Status: Continue to identify water trucking options and outreach efforts.

IMPACTS

Agricultural Impacts:

University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Agricultural Producer Survey

The UCCE agricultural producer survey continues to seek input about the effects of the drought on the local agricultural industry. The monthly survey is sent to producers, local agricultural organizations and

UCCE Farm Advisors representing a wide variety of crops and livestock providing a good picture of on-the-ground conditions and impacts from the drought.

The latest survey results indicate agricultural conditions continue to deteriorate due to lack of moisture. Strawberry and vineyard producers report changes in water availability and water quality over the past 60 days. Loss of income and reduced production levels continue throughout the county, affecting many commodities, as well as increased expenses from re-tooling irrigation systems. Avocado growers report having to pick earlier than normal, harvesting smaller fruit, fewer total pounds harvested, and lower economic returns. Many growers have stumped portions of their groves, reducing immediate water needs, but resulting in loss of production for 3-4 years.

Producers are concerned about the long-term effects on soil conditions due to lack of moisture. Results from the latest producer survey indicate that agricultural producers are interested in obtaining information related to range management, range improvement and soil salinity management. Producers are also concerned about the predictions of an El Niño weather condition, which may bring abundant rain to the central coast. This may cause soil erosion, and damage to culverts and roads. An El Niño weather pattern is especially alarming for managers of deteriorated rangeland areas, with potential impacts dependent on the severity of the predicted El Niño.

Agriculture Assistance Programs

According to staff at the USDA Farm Service Agency, as of June 19, 2014, over 550 applications have been submitted for various programs. The programs are briefly summarized as follows:

LFP – Livestock Forage Disaster Program: provides payments for grazing losses. 99% of the applications are for ranchers grazing cattle. The remaining 1 % of applicants graze sheep, goats and alpaca.

ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program: provides relief for losses due to adverse weather conditions.

ECP – Emergency Conservation Program (NRCS): provides funding for rehabilitation of farmland severely damaged by natural disasters. For example repair and restoration of wells, water tanks and springs.

EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS): provides funds for land conservation planning and implementation of conservation practices.

NAP – Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program: provides cash payments to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or planting did not occur due to natural disasters.

For information about the assistance programs, contact the USDA Farm Service Agency at 805-434-0398.

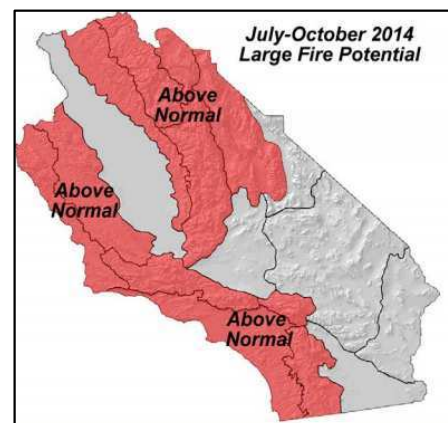
Fire Danger:

Fire Danger

As shown in the illustration to the right, forecasts indicate the County of San Luis Obispo will have an above normal large fire potential from July to October. To date, CAL FIRE has responded to **2,679 fires** across the State since January 1, burning **18,447 acres**. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 1,769 wildfires on 15,523 acres. While drought conditions have increased wildfires, additional firefighters and equipment mobilized earlier than normal have allowed CAL FIRE to contain these wildfires quickly in most cases.

Burn Ban

In order to reduce potential fire ignitions CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo suspended all burning permits and open fires within the State Responsibility Area and within the Local Responsibility Area under contract with CAL FIRE beginning July 1, 2014. This burn suspension will remain in effect until there is enough precipitation to reduce the fire threat. A Statewide burn ban also became effective on July 1, 2014, suspending open burning across 31 million acres of State Responsibility Area in California.



Attachment 1

CAL FIRE is urging residents to do their part to be fire safe during this critical time and to make sure they have prepared an emergency plan in case a fire threatens their home or family.

Live Fuel Moisture (LFM)

(LFM is the moisture content of live vegetation expressed as a percentage of the oven-dry weight.)

The normal downward summer trend is underway and expected to occur more rapidly than normal over the next 2 to 3 months. Although new growth vegetation is still just above critical in most areas, shrub fuels in all areas are “available” for burning, and recent fires in the county have shown that shrubs will burn actively when in alignment with wind and/or topography. Spring rains were also adequate to produce a crop of grass fuels, which may increase fire activity through the year due to an increase in fuel continuity compared to last year.

Dead Fuel Moisture

(The moisture content of dead organic fuels is another important component of the relative fire danger. As with LFM above, dead fuel moisture levels are a good indicator of how likely fuels are to ignite and how intensely they will burn. 100-hr fuel refers to vegetation between 1 and 3 inches in diameter and 1000-hr fuel is 3-6 inches. When the fuel moisture content is low, fires start easily and will spread rapidly.)

Currently, 1000-hr fuels remain well below average while 100-hr fuels are at average levels.

Temperatures/Relative Humidity (RH)

Due to the return of the typical “June gloom” weather pattern, coastal areas have seen conditions moderate while inland areas have seen normal warm to hot summer conditions. In fact, inland temperatures have been above normal most days for the month of June. Hot weather contributes to higher fire danger on a daily basis while also increasing the cumulative drying of the live and dead fuels, thereby increasing the fire danger.

Energy Release Component (ERC)

(ERC is an index related to how hot a fire could burn. It is directly related to the 24-hour, potential worst case, total available energy (BTUs) at the head of a fire. The ERC can serve as a good characterization of fire season as it tracks seasonal fire danger trends well. ERC has low variability, and is the best fire danger component for indicating the effects of intermediate to long-term drying on fire behavior.)

Currently, ERC values are near average.

Economic:

Drought-related job losses are continuing to increase across the state. The State's Labor & Workforce Development Agency requested that all local workforce boards provide real time information on the workforce impacts of the drought. As such, the Department of Social Services, on behalf of the San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board, is collecting information from local employers to collect the number of layoffs, business closures, and Rapid Response actions occurring in our local area. To date there have been no reported business closures or reduction in workforce to report from the current network of individuals in San Luis Obispo County.

STATE & FEDERAL KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST MONTH

Federal:

There have been no new federal actions related to the drought that affect San Luis Obispo County. Staff continues to monitor federal drought mitigation and relief efforts.

State:

State Water Conservation Campaign

The state's water conservation campaign, Save Our Water, launched *Don't Waste Summer*, a campaign devoted to providing daily tips and news to help Californians find ways to conserve at home and at work every day.

Urban Water Supplier Drought Response Survey

Water conservation efforts by a majority of water suppliers in California show that water use has declined statewide by 5 percent through May 2014, according to survey results received by the State Water

Resources Control Board (State Water Board). The survey results indicated that the Central Coast has had a 0% reduction in Urban Water Use from Jan-May 2014 compared to the 2011-13 Jan-May average.

Farm-based water efficiency grants available

The California Department of Food and Agriculture is holding workshops to help farm owners apply for grants under the State Water and Energy Efficiency Program (SWEET) program, which is funded by cap-and-trade revenues and allocated through the state's emergency drought legislation. Registration for these workshops and funding details are available on the Department's website and applications for funding are due July 15.

Governor's Drought Task Force

The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Coordination

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) continues to coordinate with state agencies and local governments to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state responses to the drought. As of July 1, 2014, Cal OES is reporting that 20 counties have proclaimed a local emergency due to the drought, including San Luis Obispo County. A total of 45 local emergency proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts.

COUNTY DROUGHT TASK FORCE KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST MONTH

County Office of Emergency Services:

San Luis Obispo County OES continues to provide weekly reports to the State's online reporting system and through ongoing weekly conference calls. As part of these calls, discussion has included state agency participation in a meeting that will also serve as a tabletop drill for water shortages. On July 17, 2014, local and state agencies will be conducting a tabletop drill to discuss actions for potential drought situations. Scenarios for review include a small community running out of water sooner than expected, wild fires occurring in areas with little to no water and to discuss the potential situation of private water vendors trucks not being able to keep up with service demands throughout the county. The tabletop exercise will be a learning event so local agencies can gather information as to what resources may be available through state agencies.

County Water Resources:

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Update

Senate Bill 104 appropriated \$200M of existing Proposition 84 IRWM grants to be awarded by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in an expedited drought relief funding round. Of the total \$1 billion authorized under Proposition 84, Legislature appropriated \$52 million to the "Central Coast Funding Area" (CCFA1) IRWM efforts. San Luis Obispo County IRWM (SLOCo) Region will compete against five IRWM regions for the remaining \$19.7 million CCFA1 allocation, to be awarded via this drought funding round and a final funding round in 2015.

The following five projects were recommended by the Regional Water Management Group for inclusion in the IRWM grant application, which was subsequently endorsed by the Water Resources Advisory Committee:

Project	Total Project Cost	Grant Funding Allocation in Application	Required Funding Match
CSA 23-Atascadero-Garden Farms Emergency Intertie	\$1,973,000	\$1,479,750	\$493,250
Heritage Ranch CSD Emergency Turnout	\$150,000	\$112,500	\$37,500
Cambria CSD Emergency Water Supply	\$5,000,000	\$3,750,000	\$1,250,000
San Simeon Small Scale Recycled Water	\$1,728,120	\$1,296,090	\$432,030
Salinas / Nacimiento / CMC Emergency Intertie	\$4,077,710	\$3,058,282	\$1,019,428
TOTAL GRANT FUNDING for SLO Co IRWM Region Drought Grant Application	\$12,928,830	\$9,696,622	\$3,232,208

On June 17, 2014, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Director or Interim Director of Public Works to file the grant application and execute the grant agreement with the California Department of Water Resources.

County Facilities Usage & Conservation Actions:

General Services Agency has taken the following actions:

- Fixture Replacement: To date, Facility Services has replaced 143 fixtures in 24 buildings to low-flow, saving an estimated 1,500 gallons of water each week.
- Water Audit: Water efficiency measures for County facilities, parks, and golf are being evaluated through PG&E's Sustainable Turnkey Solutions program. A report is expected by mid-July.
- County Fire Hydrants: County Airport fire hydrants must be flushed periodically to maintain safe water for drinking. The Airport is making the water from hydrant flushing available for agricultural operations, construction, or other purposes. Please contact the Airport at 805-781-5205 if interested in using this free water.
- Energy and Water Manager Professional Services Contract: Proposals for Energy and Water Manager professional services contract were received, reference checks in progress, and interviews with firms scheduled July 23rd. Selection of contractor and contract price negotiations anticipated in August, with contract award in September.

Drought Contingency Planning:

County Health, the Public Works Department, and CAL FIRE/County Fire continue to develop plans to ensure there is adequate supply of water for firefighting and domestic water use in the event that a community does not have enough water.

County Public Outreach Actions:

The Public Works Department continues to work with agencies affected by the drought and provide educational presentations to interested parties. Conservation mailers have been sent to retail customers.

In an effort to raise awareness about water supply issues and communicate the call for a 20% voluntary reduction in water usage, the County continues to examine multiple channels of communication for water conservation outreach efforts. As previously reported, the task force is currently examining the following tools to communicate the importance of water conservation.

- Tool #1: Local Collaboration
- Tool #2: Website Marketing & Social Media
- Tool #3: Water Purveyor Outreach (use water bill as the first-line educational tool)
- Tool #4: Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Tool #5: News Media
- Tool #6: Advertising

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

State's Water Conservation Campaign; Save our Water (www.saveourh2o.org)

California's Drought Information Clearinghouse; Drought.CA.Gov (ca.gov/drought/)

California Department of Food and Agriculture; Drought information (www.cdfa.ca.gov/drought/)

California Department of Water Resources; Current Water Conditions (www.water.ca.gov/waterconditions/drought/)

California State Water Resources Control Board; Water Rights, Drought Info and Actions
(www.swrcb.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/index.shtml)

California Department of Public Health; Drinking Water CDPH Drinking Water Program
(www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/pages/dwp.aspx)

USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information; USDA Programs
(usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=DISASTER_ASSISTANCE)

UC Cooperative Extension Drought Information Resources; Drought Information Resources;
cesanluisobispo.ucanr.edu/Drought_Information/